



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

WEST NILE VIRUS DETECTED IN ADDITIONAL MONROE COUNTY BIRDS

Two dead birds found in the Towns of Gates and Mendon have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). The birds were found on Le Manz Drive (Town of Gates) and East Street (Village of Honeoye Falls/Town of Mendon).

“Additional positive bird tests only reaffirm our belief that West Nile Virus is present throughout Monroe County,” Deputy Health Director Nancy Bennett, MD said. “Clearly, we can expect more positive birds over the coming weeks and I encourage the continued use of preventive measures, which include the use of repellents and the draining of standing water.”

The Monroe County Health Department will immediately undertake a number of actions as a result of finding a dead bird infected with WNV, including:

- Initiate mosquito larvicide program in catch basins and other standing water within an approximate two-mile radius of the where the bird was found.
- Work with town officials to survey the area within the 2-mile radius to eliminate standing water and to disseminate information on WNV
- Increase mosquito collection and testing in affected area
- Increase bird testing from area where bird was found
- Mail a comprehensive brochure, developed by the Monroe County Departments of Health and Communications and Special Events on West Nile Virus and how to protect yourself, to every household in Monroe County.

Health officials urge the public, particularly people over the age of 50, to exercise caution, but stress that less than 1% of people infected with WNV will have symptoms serious enough to require hospitalization. The vast majority of people fully recover from the illness. WNV is rarely fatal except for people who are otherwise at very high-risk due to other health problems.

West Nile Virus is a viral infection that is transmitted by mosquitoes. Most people will experience no symptoms, or will have mild flu-like symptoms such as a slight fever, headache or body aches. In the most serious cases, infection can result in encephalitis, which is an inflammation of the brain. It usually takes between 5-15 days for symptoms to develop. There is no specific treatment or vaccine for WNV.

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The Monroe County Health Department has received the required permits from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to apply larvicide to bodies of water not easily drained.

The Health Department published a notice in the Democrat and Chronicle more than a week ago, stating its intention to apply larvicides in conformance with the permits. Those permits require an additional 48-hour notice of intent to apply the larvicide in specific areas. That notice, for the following two (2) areas (an approximate 2-mile radius surrounding the sites where the birds were found), is given today by the publication of this and other news releases:

Area 1 (Gates): the area bounded by the Erie Canal on the north, The Greater Rochester International Airport on the south, Gardiner Ave./Thurston Rd. on the east and Elmgrove Road on the west.

Area 2 (Mendon): the area bounded by Stoney Lonesome Road on the north, the County Line on the south, Amann Road on the east and Route 15A on the west.

Health officials request that the public continue to report dead birds to enable the tracking of the illness in Monroe County. Staff may ask that the bird be retained for testing or instruct people to dispose of the bird if testing is deemed unnecessary. Crows and bluejays are the primary bird species being tested at this time.

A 24-hour information line has been established and will be updated regularly. The number is **234-9600**. Extensive information on WNV is available at the Monroe County Web site: www.co.monroe.ny.us/health.

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For More Information:
Communications and Special Events, 428-2380,
Or see us on the web at www.co.monroe.ny.us